



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20350

SECNAVINST 3403.1  
Op-604  
18 June 1975

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 3403.1

Subj: Rules governing the use of riot control agents and chemical herbicides in war

Encl: (1) Executive Order 11850

1. Purpose. To promulgate the contents of enclosure (1).
2. Discussion. By enclosure (1) the President has renounced certain uses of chemical herbicides and riot control agents in war.
3. Action. Enclosure (1) is forwarded for immediate implementation. Addressees will develop and issue those internal policies and procedures which they deem necessary to ensure compliance therewith.

*J. William Middendorf*  
J. William Middendorf II  
Secretary of the Navy

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18 JUN 1975

## EXECUTIVE ORDER 11850

RENUNCIATION OF CERTAIN USES IN WAR OF CHEMICAL  
HERBICIDES AND RIOT CONTROL AGENTS

The United States renounces, as a matter of national policy, first use of herbicides in war except use, under regulations applicable to their domestic use, for control of vegetation within U.S. bases and installations or around their immediate defensive perimeters, and first use of riot control agents in war except in defensive military modes to save lives such as:

(a) Use of riot control agents in riot control situations in areas under direct and distinct U.S. military control, to include controlling rioting prisoners of war.

(b) Use of riot control agents in situations in which civilians are used to mask or screen attacks and civilian casualties can be reduced or avoided.

(c) Use of riot control agents in rescue missions, in remotely isolated areas, of downed aircrews and passengers, and escaping prisoners.

(d) Use of riot control agents in rear echelon areas outside the zone of immediate combat to protect convoys from civil disturbances, terrorists and paramilitary organizations.

I have determined that the provisions and procedures prescribed by this Order are necessary to ensure proper implementation and observance of such national policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States of America by the Constitution and laws of the United States and as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. The Secretary of Defense shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the use by the Armed Forces of the United States of any riot control agents and chemical herbicides in war is prohibited unless such use has Presidential approval, in advance.

Enclosure (1)

18 JUN 1975

Sec. 2. The Secretary of Defense shall prescribe the rules and regulations he deems necessary to ensure that the national policy herein announced shall be observed by the Armed Forces of the United States.

GERALD R. FORD

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
APRIL 8, 1975